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MEMORANDUM FOR: James Fallows, Chief Speech Writer
Office of the Press Secretary
to the President

SUBJECT : President's Remarks at the US Naval Academy

Attached are some thoughts on threats to our strengths which should be of direct concern to the graduates, yet convey a larger message to a broader audience. Specifically:

- o Soviet military threat - the fact that this is their only real means of competing internationally today.
- o The threat of assuming that military strength and a search for peace (detente, etc.) are antithetical.
- o The threat of being complacent and failing to seize opportunities to negotiate toward a better world order.
- o The threat of assuming somebody will think about these problems.



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Attachment

THREATS TO OUR STRENGTH

1. Military
 - Soviets rely on military strength as the single national strength which can be used to influence world events.
 - Economic philosophy inadequate to sustain strong Soviet economic growth.
Therefore not exportable as an influence.
 - Soviet political philosophy no longer an attractive export to more independent developing nations.
 - Therefore, if Soviets are to exert influence, it must be done with military which can be strengthened/increased as necessary.
- Danger
 - Non-superpowers may perceive^a Soviet military advantage and submit to pressure tactics.
 - USA may view military power as less utile - acquiesce to Soviets, permitting them to make the perception that they are the dominant military power a reality.
- Your role
 - You help reduce that perception by the role you play in US military.
 - Beyond that, no amount of hardware, manpower, or training will substitute for a conviction - recognized/perceived by others - that US intends to stand strong.

- You help do this also by what you say, do, believe.

2. Another threat : how we work toward a new order in the world without becoming lulled by the dream of that ideal.

e.g. Detente

- Makes military look less essential; gives great importance to peaceful negotiations, greater friendship. Military power seems inimical to these goals.

- But fact of Soviet actions demonstrates military preparedness indispensable even even while talking peace :

e.g. In Central Europe, Soviets have roughly

- twice as many tanks as NATO
- twice as many artillery pieces
- three times as many anti-tank weapons
- twice as many aircraft

Weapons building/preparedness/military strength do not conflict with ideals of negotiating toward peace.

- Cannot set aside the impetus of fear in negotiations - like SALT - without stimulating complacency

- There would be no reason to negotiate if each side did not perceive the other to be roughly equal in strength, or growing stronger - therefore something to be gained by negotiating.
 - Consequently, we must remain strong even, and perhaps especially, when seeking peace.
3. Long range threat
- That because we grow complacent we will not seize the opportunity to negotiate.
 - If we do not negotiate where will armament build-up go? Breeders? Plutonium? Proliferation?, etc.
 - Too many risks not to find/make opportunities to forestall long term threats to US. To world.

Charge to Class:

Cannot assume others doing this thinking
(this might be the ultimate threat)

- Not enough to learn the details of your profession
- Must contribute more
- Must think about broad issues - generate ideas - contribute those ideas.
- Begin now.